

agreed to embody them in a petition in sixteen articles to the Lords. It demanded the suspension of incompetent ministers, insisted that candidates for the ministry should be strictly examined as to their gifts and knowledge, proposed that the bishops should not ordain such candidates except with the assistance of six other ministers, that the parishioners should be allowed opportunity of objecting to any nominee to a benefice, that Convocation should be composed of one House under an elected moderator, and that a certain number of laymen should be eligible as members, prohibited the bishops from requiring any oath or subscription from those entering the ministry not expressly prescribed by statute, directed them to cease molesting ministers because of nonconformity in small matters, craved indulgence for those who had been suspended or deprived on this account, and condemned the oath *ex officio*, the abuse of excommunication, and the practice of non-residence and pluralities.

The Commons thus set themselves in direct antagonism to the hierarchy on the burning questions of the hour. They laid stress on the spirit rather than the form, and had no sympathy with the persecuting tactics which sacrificed spirit to form, law to legality. Their concern was not for uniformity, but for an efficient ministry, and to secure an efficient ministry they were ready to go the length of checking the bishop by the presbyter, and to give the people some control in the appointment of their ministers and some share in ecclesiastical legislation. The hierarchy naturally took alarm, and exerted all its influence to secure the rejection of the petition by the Lords. The Lords, therefore, curtly replied that many of the articles were unnecessary, and the others had already been provided for. It at least frightened the archbishop into drawing up some remedial canons against such abuses as excessive excommunications and pluralities, and these measures gave Elizabeth a pretext for reading these Puritan meddlers with her ecclesiastical prerogative a severe lecture, on the prorogation of Parliament shortly after. While threatening to depose negligent bishops, she was determined not to tolerate Puritan "newfangledness." "I must pronounce them dangerous to a kingly rule to have every man, according to his own censure, to make a doom of the validity and privity of